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6 November 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, Development Branch, DPD-DD/P

SUBJECT : Cabin Pressurization of A-12

1. LAC report SP-151 specifies a cockpit altitude of 26,100 feet during flight at that or higher altitudes in the A-12.

2. This feature is considered questionable. In a recent briefing by the flight surgeon during T-33 checkout at Andrews AFB, 20,000 feet cabin altitude was stressed as the maximum recommended for extended flight. The reasoning given was that no known cases of bends or neurological dysbarisms have occurred where cabin altitude was 20,000 feet or less; in recent years there has been an increasing incidence of neurological dysbarism cases. Symptoms of this effect are nausea, headache, possible unconsciousness, etc., which disappear upon landing but reappear in about two hours, with frequently fatal results.

3. Virtually all jet fighter and U-2 pilots have spent many hours at cabin altitudes above 20,000 feet. This experience does not imply that it is acceptable to do so, but only that it has been done and gotten away with. There are also many cases where aircraft crashed for unknown reasons and this altitude condition could have well been a significant factor.

3. It would appear reasonable to remain within the limits of 20,000 feet cabin altitude, if feasible, in the A-12. It is proposed that this possibility be investigated by LAC and implemented if possible.

4. Request comments.

SIGNED

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